

Ayguesvives, March 22nd 2020**PRESS RELEASE**

AERONAUTICS

CNIM Air Space: a new production line dedicated to tethered aerostats and airships

CNIM Air Space inaugurates a new production line dedicated to the assembly of its tethered aerostats and airships' envelopes. The line has been set up inside CNIM Air Space's current factory near Toulouse, in the South-West of France. It is a new addition to CNIM Air Space's unique industrial facility in Europe, focused on "lighter-than-air" airborne solutions. An essential step to support the growth of this subsidiary of CNIM Group.

CNIM Air Space, a subsidiary of CNIM Group since March 2019, is one of the main European actor in the field of "lighter-than-air" airborne platforms and systems. The company, which employs more than 60 collaborators, designs and manufactures tethered aerostats, drone airships, stratospheric balloons and thermal protections for satellites.



© CNIM Air Space / New production line

A new production line to address a growing market

"We are currently working with major public and private actors in the Defence, Security and Space sectors", explains Gaëtan Breurec, CNIM Air Space's Managing Director. "We have been awarded with a significant number of contracts in 2019 and 2020. Our new production line is giving us the capacity to efficiently fulfil those contracts, while remaining committed to our long-time customers and ensuring the quality level expected when manufacturing aeronautics systems".

On this new 55 meters' long production line, CNIM Air Space will produce the envelopes of its tethered aerostats systems. Those aerostats, which are linked to the ground by a tether, are deployed for 24/7 surveillance or communication missions, lasting from a few days up to several months. Depending on the use case, they are complementary to drones, helicopters and airplanes. Nowadays, they are often deployed for maritime surveillance, securing large events, protecting sensitive sites, etc.

The new line will also produce the envelopes of the drone airships developed within a R&D partnership between CNIM Air Space and RTE (the French electricity transmission system operator), called the "[Diridrone](#)" project.



© CNIM Air Space / Eagle Owl tethered aerostat

The main equipment of the new production line is a motorised assembly machine. *"This tailor-made machine achieves ongoing assemblies and uses several assembly technologies, which give us the ability to select different kind of materials for our aerostats. Thanks to the motorization, the machine moves over the assembly line. Both our production technique and the space used to set up the line are optimized. Finally, the operators are now on board the machine. It offers them more comfortable working conditions"* explains François Martin, industrial engineer, in charge to set up the new line.

A path towards job creation

Several new jobs will be opened to support the team which is already working on the line: a pilot on the assembly machine, and several operators to assemble the envelopes.

"This new production line demonstrates our know-how and expertise. It is a key addition to our industrial equipment, to answer the growing demand of the European Defence, Security and Space sectors" concludes Gaëtan Breurec.

About CNIM Air Space: cnim-air-space.com

CNIM Air Space is a subsidiary of CNIM Group, attached to the Innovation and Systems sector. CNIM Air Space relies on a strong 50 years' experience in the assembly of flexible materials, gained through projects designed for the benefit of major actors such as Thales and Airbus Groups, the CNES and the French Defence procurement agency (DGA).

Its offer is mainly dedicated to Defense, Security and Space markets. CNIM Air Space designs and manufactures:

- Airborne surveillance and communication systems, based on tethered aerostats or drone airships,
- Stratospheric balloons, mainly dedicated to scientific missions, led by European and worldwide space agencies,
- Thermal protections for satellites, supplied to the main European satellite manufacturers.

CNIM Air Space employs 60 collaborators and is located near Toulouse at the heart of the French aerospace ecosystem.

About CNIM Group: cnim.com

Founded in 1856, CNIM is a French equipment manufacturer and industrial contractor operating on a worldwide basis. The Group provides its products and services to major public and private sector organizations, local authorities and national governments in Environment, Energy, Defense, and High Technology markets. Technological innovation is at the core of equipment and services designed and manufactured by the Group. They contribute to produce cleaner and more competitive energy, to limit environmental impacts of industrial activities, to secure sensitive facilities and infrastructures, and to protect individuals and nation states. CNIM is listed on the Euronext exchange in Paris. It relies on a stable family-based majority shareholding structure committed to its development. The Group employs 2,800 people and had 2019 revenues of €588.4 million in 2019, 48.2 % of which was from exports.

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CNIM AIR SPACE

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